SKYWARN Training Class Announcement

This is a training class on how to become a volunteer storm-spotter for the National Weather Service's (NWS) San Joaquin Valley forecast office, located in Hanford.

When: 6-8 pm Thursday October 25th
Where: Clovis Fire Department training room
Contact: Warning Coordination Meteorologist James Brotherton
                       559-584-3752

Capacity is limited to 45 attendees. Please call to reserve a seat!

What is SKYWARN?

SKYWARN is a volunteer program with nearly 280,000 trained severe weather spotters. These volunteers help keep their local communities safe by providing timely and accurate reports of severe weather to the National Weather Service.

Although SKYWARN spotters provide essential information for all types of weather hazards, the main responsibility of a SKYWARN spotter is to identify and describe severe local storms. In the average year, 10,000 severe thunderstorms, 5,000 floods and more than 1,000 tornadoes occur across the United States. These events threatened lives and property.

Since the program started in the 1970s, the information provided by SKYWARN spotters, coupled with Doppler radar technology, improved satellite and other data, has enabled NWS to issue more timely and accurate warnings for tornadoes, severe thunderstorms and flash floods.

SKYWARN storm spotters are part of the ranks of citizens who form the Nation's first line of defense against severe weather. There can be no finer reward than to know that their efforts have given communities the precious gift of time--seconds and minutes that can help save lives.

Who is Eligible?

NWS encourages anyone with an interest in public service and access to communication, such as HAM radio, to join the SKYWARN program. Volunteers include police and fire personnel, dispatchers, EMS workers, public utility workers and other concerned private citizens. Individuals affiliated with hospitals, schools, churches, nursing homes or who have a responsibility for protecting others are also encouraged to become a spotter.

How Can I Get Involved?

NWS has 122 local Weather Forecast Offices, each with a Warning Coordination Meteorologist, who is responsible for administering the SKYWARN program in their local area. Training is conducted at these local offices and covers:

- Basics of thunderstorm development
- Fundamentals of storm structure
- Identifying potential severe weather features
- Information to report
- How to report information
- Basic severe weather safety